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693.e.8

Humble Exhortation

To the Honourable

House of Commons,

ASSEMBLED IN

PARLIAMENT.

Taken out of a SERMON

Preach'd upon *Hosea* xiv. 1, 2.

O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine Iniquity. Take with you Words, and turn to the Lord, say unto him, Take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciously: So will we render the Calves of our Lips.

By EDWARD REYNOLDS,

Sometime BISHOP of NORWICH.

Whereunto is added, by Way of APPENDIX,
An Excellent Passage of Archbishop TILLOTSON
concerning Moderation, in his Preface to Bishop
WILKINS'S Sermons.

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*Take with you Words, and Turn to the Lord, say unto him,
Take away all Iniquity, Hof. 14. 2.*

THere are Five notable Duties, which these Words
Take away all Iniquity, lead us unto :

1. *' Sense of Sin, as of an Heavy Burden.*
2. *' A Full Confession, not of many, but of all Sins.*
3. *' Weariness and Detestation of all Sin.*
4. *' An Acknowledgment of our own Impotency to remove Sin from our Selves.*
5. *' An Imploring of God's Mercy and Grace, that what we cannot do our selves, he would be pleased to do for us.*

' The Things we Pray for in this Petition are :

1. *' For Remission.*
2. *' For Sanctification.*
3. *' For continued Renovation;* that as in Sanctification begun we have Power against all Kinds of Sin, so by the continual Supplies of the Holy Spirit, we may have further Power against all Degrees and Remainders of Sin.

These are the Heads of his Discourse upon those Words, Take away all Iniquity; which having insisted upon, he thus proceeds :

' Those things which God worketh in us, and bestoweth upon us by his Grace, he also requireth of us by his Command. Sometimes he Promiseth to Turn us, sometimes he Commandeth us to Turn to him : Sometimes he biddeth us put away Sin, and sometimes he promiseth to take it away from us. In the one shewing us what is our Duty, and in the other where is our Help. And as this latter Consideration calleth upon our Faith to Pray : So the former upon our Obedience to Work. I shall therefore (Right Honourable) humbly offer a double Exhortation unto all of you.

' First, That every one of you would seriously endeavour to Take away all Iniquity from his own Person. And unto this there lieth upon you a double Obligation : One with relation to the Safety of your own Souls;

Souls; for whatever other Honour, Wealth, Wisdom,
 Learning, Interest a Man hath besides, if Sin hath the
 Predominancy, they are but Satan's Magazine, and
 that Man his Servant to imploy them against God,
 that gave them: And the more Mercies any Man hath
 been trusted withal, the heavier Judgment will be pour-
 ed out upon the Breach of that Trust: Better be a
 Wooden Vessel to hold Wine, than a Silver Vessel to hold
 Excrements; better be a Beggar with the Treasure of
 God's Grace, than a Prince with the Load of a Man's
 own Sins.

But there is a further Tye upon you, with relation
 unto the Success of that Honourable Employment, where-
 unto you are called. *Ita nati estis, ut bona*
malaque Vestra ad Rempublicam pertineant: Tacit.
 God will be Sanctified in all those that Annal.
 draw near unto Him, as well in Civil, as in lib. 4.
 Sacred Administrations.

It is very hard for a Person, in whom Sin Rules, to
 be Constantly Faithful to any Publick and Honourable
 Service. For Grace only establiseth the Heart, Heb. 13.
 9. Achitophel, a Man of great Wisdom, falls from Da-
 vid: Joab, a Man of great Valour, falls from Solomon.
 And admit he be Faithful, yet the Sin of his Heart
 sends out a Prohibition to the Wisdom of his Head,
 and the Labour of his Hand. He that will be a fit
 Vessel for his Master's Use, must first of all Purge him-
 self, 2 Tim. 2. 21. As we first Cleanse a Vessel before we
 use it. When Joshua was to Negotiate a Publick Refor-
 mation, and to Administer a Publick Service, his Filthy
 Garments must be taken from him, and he must be
 clothed with Change of Raiment, Zech. 3. 4, 7.

Let every one of you make his Publick Service, One
 Argument more than he had before, for his Necessary
 Reformation; and let the Piety of your Lives, bear Wit-
 ness to the Integrity of your Honourable Undertakings.

Secondly, As you must Take away Sin from your Selves,
 so make it your Principal Work to Take away Iniquity

out of the Land. Liberty, Property, Privileges are Sacred
 and Precious Things, NOT TO BE IN THE LEAST
 MANNER BETRAY'D; yea, in some Sense we
 R. Akika may look upon them, as the Jews upon their
 in Pirke Massora, Tanquam Legis & Pietatis Sepem;
 Aboth. as a Fence and Mound unto Religion it self.

Arbitrary Government would quickly be
 tampering in Sacred Things, because Corruption in
 the Church is marvellously subservient and advan-
 tageous to Corruption in the State. But the most
 Orient Pearl of this is our RELIGION, and the Bitterest
 Enemies unto that, are our Sins. These are the Snuffs
 that Dim our Candlestick, and Threaten the Removal
 of it; these the Leaven that defile our Passovers, and
 urge God to Pass away and Depart from us.----

Think seriously what Ways may be most Effectual
 to Purge this Leaven out of the Land. The Principal
 Sacrificing Knife, which Kills and Mortifies Sin, is the
 Word of God, and the Knowledge of it. It would have
 been a great Unhappines to the Common-
 Sueton. in wealth of Learning, if Caligula had (as he
 Calig. endeavoured) deprived the World of the
 cap. 34. Writings of Homer, Virgil, and Livy. But
 O! what an Egyptian Calamity is it, to
 have in this Sunshine of the Gospel, Thousands of Per-
 sons and Families (as I doubt not but upon Enquiry it
 would appear) without the Writings of the Prophets and
 Apostles. O, that Provision were made, that every Fa-
 mily might have a Bible in it; that all Reproachful Titles,
 [such as Whig and Tory, High-Church and Low-Church, &c.]
 which the Devil useth as Scare-Grows, to keep back
 People from pressing in upon Christ's Kingdom, were
 by Law proscribed; that Scandalous Sins [as Pride,
 Swearing, Drunkenness, Whoredom, &c.] were by the
 Awfulness and Severity of Discipline more Blasted
 and brought to Shame! That Places of Religious Wor-
 ship were more frequented, the Lord's Day more sancti-
 fied, and his Ordinances more revered, and his Mi-
 nisters,

* *nisters, which Teach the good Knowledge of the Lord, more*
 * *encouraged ! That all the several Fountains of the*
 * *Commonwealth were settled in a sound and flourish-*
 * *ing Constitution ; That in every Place we might see*
 * *Piety the Elm to every other Vine, the Supporter to*
 * *every other Profession ! Learning adorned with Piety,*
 * *and Law administred with Piety, and Counsels managed*
 * *with Piety, and Trade regulated with Piety, and the*
 * *Plough followed with Piety. That when Ministers fight*
 * *against Sin, with the Sword of God's Word, You, who*
 * *are the NOBLES and the GENTRY of the Land, would*
 * *Second them, and Frown upon it too. A Frown of yours*
 * *may sometimes do as much Service to Christ, as a*
 * *Sermon of ours. And he cannot but take it very un-*
 * *kindly from you, if you will not bestow your Coun-*
 * *tenance on him, who bestowed his Blood on you.*

* *That you would let the Strictness of your Lives, and*
 * *the Piety of your Examples, put Wickedness out of*
 * *Countenance, and make it appear (as indeed it is) a*
 * *Base and Sordid Thing !*

* *If we would thus sadly set our selves against the*
 * *Sins of the Land, no Power, no Malice, no Policies should*
 * *stand between us and God's Mercies : Religion would*
 * *Flourish, and Peace would Settle, and Trade would Re-*
 * *vive, and the Hearts of Men would be Re-united, and*
 * *the Church be as a City compacted, and this Nation would*
 * *continue to be, as it hath been, like the Garden of Eden,*
 * *a Mirror of Prosperity and Happiness to other People.*

* *Right Honourable, This Nation hath put into your*
 * *Hands all that is Outwardly Dear unto them, their*
 * *Persons, Posterities, Liberties, Estates ; in these Sad and*
 * *Woful Distractions, they look upon You as Binders and*
 * *Healers, and Standers in the Gap, and Repairers of the*
 * *wast Places. God hath called You unto an High and*
 * *Great Trust ; and the sad Distempers of the Church and*
 * *State, and in these Two, the Interest of All the Protestant*
 * *Churches, call upon You, like the Man of Macedonia in*
 * *St. Paul's Vision, Acts 16. 9. Come and Help us.*

* Now

Now In this Great Straight, when the Children are
 come to the Birth, and there is no Strength to bring forth,
 Stir up the Graces of God in You, call together all that
 is within You to Call upon his Name; Improve the ut-
 termost of Your Interests in Him for the State of his Church;
 Manage every one of his Gifts to the Closing of those mi-
 serable Breaches, which Threaten an Inundation of Cal-
 lamity upon us all. Wisdom, and Learning, and Piety,
 and Prudence, are Healing Things: Remember (and O
 that God would put it into the Hearts of this whole
 Kingdom, from the Throne to the Plough, to Remem-
 ber) the Fate of a divided Kingdom, from the Mouth
 of Truth it self. O that we would all Remember, that
 Misunderstandings, and Jealousies, and Divisions of Heart,
 are an high Evidence of God's Displeasure; and that
 through the Wrath of the Lord of Hosts, a Land is darkned,
 and as it were infatuated; when Manasseh is against E-
 phraim, and Ephraim against Manasseh, and every one eat-
 eth the Flesh of his own Arm, Isai. 9. 19, 21. O let us
 all Remember, what it cost Shechem and Abimelech;
 what it cost Benjamin, and the other Tribes, even the
 Loss of Threescore and Five Thousand Men! Remember
 Priamus and his Children will Laugh; Babylon will
 Clap their Hands, and Wag their Heads; no such
 Time for Shishak the Egyptian to Trouble Jerusalem, as
 when Israel is Divided, 2 Chron. 12. 2.
 Let it never be said of God's own People, that they
 are fallen into the Curse of Midianites, and Ammonites,
 and Edomites, and Philistines, to Help forward the De-
 struction of one another. O that God would give
 this whole Nation Hearts to Consider these Things,
 that he would put a Spirit of Peace and Resolved Union
 into the Minds of this whole People, To be True to their
 own Happiness; and by how much the greater are the
 Subtilties of Men to Divide them, to be so much the more
 Firmly United in Prayers to God, and in Concord between
 Themselves, that they may not Expose their Persons
 Estates, Posterities, and (which is Dearest of all) their
 Religion

are Religion, to the Crafty and Bloody Advantages of the
 Enemies of the Protestant Churches; who in Human View
 could have no Way to Overthrow them, but by their
 own Dissentions.

APPENDIX,

Containing an Excellent Passage of Archbishop Tillotson's
 concerning Moderation, in his Preface to Bishop Wilkins's
 Sermons.

I Purposely, says he, mention his Moderation, and
 likewise adventure to commend him for it, not-
 withstanding that this Virtue, so much esteemed and
 magnified by Wise Men in all Ages, hath of late been
 declaimed against with so much Zeal and Fierceness,
 and yet with good Grace and Confidence, as if it were
 not only No Virtue, but even the Sum and Abridg-
 ment of All Vices: I say, notwithstanding all this, I am
 still of the Old Opinion, that MODERATION is a VIRTUE,
 and one of the Peculiar Ornaments and Advantages
 of the Excellent Constitution of our Church, and must
 at last be the Temper of her Members, especially the
 CLERGY, if ever we seriously intend the Firm Establish-
 ment of this Church; and do not industriously design,
 by Cherishing Heats and Divisions among our Selves,
 to let in POPERY at these Breaches.

For the Archbishop was very sensible, that as the Union
 of Protestants, tho' dissenting in some lesser Matters, yet
 agreeing in Fundamentals, would be a Fence against Po-
 pery; so their Differences and Contentions amongst them-
 selves would lay them open to be invaded by it. He
 was no Stranger to the Politicks of the Jesuits for the
 Bringing in of Popery into a Nation; who, among other
 Rules, which they lay down for the Restoring of it, ad-
 vise, to make Use of the Contentions and Discords that
 are among Protestants. See Campanella's Counsel for the
 Promoting

Promoting of the Spanish Interest in England in Queen Elizabeth's Days; and *Adam Contarini's* Directions in his *Politics*, lib. 2. cap. 16, 17, 18. of vs. W. on vs. d. b. 100.

That we may be guarded against this Jesuitical Design, let us be careful to Exercise that Moderation towards one another, which the Christian Religion strictly enjoins, and the Publick Peace and Safety indispensably require.

' If ever, saith Dr. Puller, the Practice of Moderation, as well as any Discourse thereon, were seasonable, it is Now; when, for ought we know, the lasting Happiness of the Kingdom and the Church may depend immediately upon this Rare and Desirable Temper, acknowledged of all most Excellent. Puller of Moderation. Pref. to the Reader.

' 'Tis a Duty this, saith Bishop Wilkins (in that Excellent Discourse of his upon Moderation, Phil. 4. 5. Let your Moderation be known unto all Men. The Lord is at Hand. Sermons preached upon several Occasions, p. 426. Edit. 1682.) ' wherein all sorts of Persons are concerned, not only those of a Private Condition, in their Dealings one with another; but likewise such as are Publick Magistrates, both to their Making and Executing of Laws. They who are to consult Publick Settlement, should have special Regard to their Equity and Moderation, thereby to Heal the Minds of Men, and to Compose their Differences. ————— ' I cannot omit that Passage out of Seneca, so proper to this Purpose. Quod si Dii placabiles & æqui delicta potentium non statim fulminibus persequuntur, quanto æquius est homines hominibus præpositos miti animo Exercere imperium? If God doth not presently take Vengeance of our Faults with Thunder from Heaven, why should not Men by his Example become Gentle and Mild towards one another? 'Tis a Thought this, very proper for a Man to revolve in his Mind, when he is by his Passion provoked to deal with Rigour and Extremity towards others.